

CLAIMS

1. In an electronic device that accepts drawn graphic entries and includes a screen display, a method for creating headings in text displayed on the screen,

5 including the steps of:

drawing a staircase object having at least one vertical segment joined to at least one horizontal segment to define at least one step;

recognizing the drawn staircase object;

entering at least one alphanumeric character adjacent to said at least one
10 step to define a heading style for said at least one step and create a staircase formatting object;

thereafter automatically creating a heading wherever said at least one alphanumeric character appears at the beginning of a line in said text.

15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of recognizing the drawn staircase object further includes indicating to the user that the hand drawn object has been recognized as a staircase object.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said step of indicating to the user
20 includes replacing said hand drawn staircase object with a machine drawn staircase object.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein said step of indicating to the user includes highlighting said hand drawn staircase object.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein said step of indicating to the user includes providing a visible or audible indication to the user.

5 6. The method of claim 1, wherein said staircase formatting object includes a plurality of steps, each step defining a respective separate heading with a machine-rendered staircase object having a substantially similar size and configuration;

10 7. The method of claim 6, wherein each respective separate heading is automatically indented a distance corresponding to the lateral position of the corresponding step in said staircase formatting object.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein each respective separate heading is
15 defined by a respective unique selection of at least one alphanumeric character.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of entering at least one alphanumeric character includes typing said at least one character within a limited distance from said at least one step.

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10. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of entering at least one alphanumeric character includes writing said at least one character within a limited distance from said at least one step.

11. The method of claim 1, further including the step of drawing an arrow from said staircase formatting object to a text object to apply the headings of said staircase formatting object to said text object.

5 12. The method of claim 6, wherein each respective separate heading is vertically spaced a distance corresponding either to the vertical spacing of the corresponding step in said staircase formatting object or to a preset default.

10 13. The method of claim 12, wherein said vertical spacing may be modified by clicking and vertically dragging on said corresponding step in said staircase formatting object.

15 14. The method of claim 7, wherein said distance may be modified by clicking and horizontally dragging on said corresponding step in said staircase formatting object.

20 15. The method of claim 8, wherein each respective separate heading may differ in at least one of the following characteristics: font, size, case, color, numerical system, and punctuation marks.

 16. The method of claim 7, wherein said step of automatically creating an indented heading further includes creating each successive heading with serially consecutive alphanumeric characters in the font and style of said at least one alphanumeric character.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one alphanumeric character is agglomerated to said staircase formatting object.

5 18. The method of claim 8, wherein said respective unique selections of at least one alphanumeric character are agglomerated to said staircase formatting object.

10 19. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of typing a <cr> character in the text is prevented from creating a new heading.

20. The method of claim 1, wherein said staircase formatting object may be copied, pasted, and applied to any text object.

15 21. The method of claim 1, wherein said staircase formatting object may be saved, recalled, and applied to any text object.

20 22. The method of claim 16, wherein said serially consecutive alphanumeric characters may proceed from single character headings to multiple character headings.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the text of said successive headings of said single character is indented a preset number of spaces to the right of said single character headings.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the text of said successive headings of said multiple characters is indented a preset number of spaces to the right of said multiple character headings, and said text of said headings of said single character is indented additionally to be left aligned with said headings of said multiple characters.

25. The method of claim 22, wherein said single character headings and said multiple character headings are all vertically aligned at their rightmost characters.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the text of said single and multiple character headings is uniformly indented a preset number of spaces to the right of said rightmost characters.

27. The method of claim 22, wherein said single character headings and said multiple character headings are all vertically aligned at their leftmost characters.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein the text of said single and multiple character headings is indented a preset number of spaces to the right of the respective heading.

29. The method of claim 16, wherein the text of said successive headings is indented to a variable amount that is set by the user.

30. The method of claim 1, further including the step of substituting a
5 graphic object for said at least one alphanumeric character.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the step of substituting includes placing said graphic object onscreen, and drawing an arrow from said graphic object to said at least one alphanumeric character of said staircase formatting
10 object.

32. In an electronic device that accepts drawn graphic entries and includes a screen display, a method for creating margins in a text object displayed on the screen, including the steps of:

15 first, drawing at least one margin-creating graphic entry vertically downwardly to the topmost line of said text object;

second, recognizing the margin-creating graphic entry and its context and replacing the margin-creating graphic entry with a machine-rendered margin indicator and a margin line extending horizontally and spanning the top of said
20 text object, said margin indicator defining one side margin of said text object;

said margin indicator being horizontally moveable along said margin line to alter said one side margin of said text object.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein said margin-creating graphic entry comprises a hand drawn arrow.

34. The method of claim 32, wherein said margin indicator comprises a
5 machine rendered arrow .

35. The method of claim 34, further including repeating said first and second steps to create first and second margin arrows at laterally opposed sides of said text object.

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36. The method of claim 34, further including the step of duplicating said margin arrow to define first and second margin arrows at laterally opposed sides of said text object.

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37. The method of claim 34, further including the step of displaying an Info Canvas for said margin line, said Info Canvas including a switch for making said margin line invisible.

38. The method of claim 34, further including two margin arrows
20 agglomerated to said margin line.

39. The method of claim 38, further including the step of selecting contiguous text lines within said text object and dragging said margin arrows

horizontally along said margin line to alter the margins of the selected contiguous lines of text.

40. The method of claim 38, further including the step of selecting non-
5 contiguous text lines within said text object and dragging said margin arrows horizontally along said margin line to alter the margins of the selected non-contiguous lines of text.

41. The method of claim 38, further including the step of adding at least
10 one tab stop to said margin line.

42. The method of claim 41, wherein the step of adding at least one tab stop includes typing a "T" on the screen display, dragging the "T" to said margin line, said "T" being agglomerated to said margin line, the position of said
15 "T" on said margin line defining a tab stop for said text object.

43. The method of claim 34, wherein said margin line and margin arrow may be copied, pasted, and applied to any text object.

20 44. The method of claim 34, wherein said margin line and margin arrow may be saved, recalled, and applied to any text object.

45. The method of claim 41, wherein said margin line and margin arrow and tab stop may be copied, pasted, and applied to any text object.

46. The method of claim 41, wherein said margin line and margin arrow and tab stop may be saved, recalled, and applied to any text object.

5 47. The method of claim 34, further including the step of accessing the Info Canvas for a VDACC in which the text object is contained and changing margin settings within said Info Canvas.

10 48. The method of claim 34, further including the step of adding heading formats through the use of a staircase formatting object, the heading indentations being substantially unchanged relative to the left margin by user repositioning of the margin arrow at the left side of the text object.

15 49. The method of claim 48, wherein adding heading formats includes the further steps of:

 drawing a staircase object having at least one vertical segment joined to at least one horizontal segment to define at least one step;

 recognizing the drawn staircase object;

20 entering at least one alphanumeric character adjacent to said at least one step to define a heading style for said at least one step and create a staircase formatting object;

 thereafter automatically creating an indented heading wherever said at least one alphanumeric character appears at the beginning of a line in said text.

50. The method of claim 49, wherein said step of recognizing the drawn staircase object further includes indicating to the user that the hand drawn object has been recognized as a staircase object.

5 51. The method of claim 50, wherein said step of indicating to the user includes replacing said hand drawn staircase object with a machine drawn staircase object.

10 52. The method of claim 50, wherein said step of indicating to the user includes highlighting said hand drawn staircase object.

53. The method of claim 50, wherein said step of indicating to the user includes providing a visible or audible indication to the user.